National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

John C. Stennis Space Center
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StenniSphere

StenniSphere, Stennis Space Center's award-winning visitor center, features 14,000 square feet of informative displays and exhibits from NASA, the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command and other agencies. Visitors from around the world tour the space center each year. Tours to StenniSphere originate approximately every 15 minutes from the Launch Pad tour stop at the Hancock County Welcome Center at Interstate 10, Exit 2, just 45 miles east of New Orleans.

StenniSphere offers narrated tours of America's largest rocket propulsion test complex, where all Space Shuttle Main Engines are tested and proven flight-worthy. It also features indoor and outdoor exhibits that are fun and educational for both children and adults.

On display at the Launch Pad is a 30-foot Lunar Lander that was used as a trainer by Apollo astronauts for their Moon mission, complete with Apollo 13 Astronaut Fred Haise's boot prints and autograph at its base.

Visitors board shuttles for a 25-minute narrated tour through SSC's unique acoustical buffer zone to America's largest rocket propulsion testing complex. This is where Apollo Saturn V engines were tested in the 1960s and today where the Space Shuttle's powerful main engines are tested and proven flight-worthy. NASA's next-generation rocket engines also are tested at SSC.

The lobby of StenniSphere features an exhibit highlighting astronauts from Mississippi and Louisiana, pioneer rocket scientist Dr. Wernher von Braun, as well as the late Sen. John C. Stennis, for whom the center is named.

Indoor Exhibits

- Moon Rock – collected by the crew of Apollo 15 in August 1971, estimated to be more than 3 billion years old
- Apollo 4 Command Module – unmanned module launched Nov. 9, 1967, to test the thermal protection system during re-entry
- Apollo 13 Spacesuit – worn by Mississippi Astronaut Fred Haise, a crew member of the Apollo 13 mission in April 1970
- Test Control Center – a mock-up of a Stennis Space Center test control center where you can "test" a Space Shuttle Main Engine and "launch" a rocket

- Space Shuttle Cockpit – land a computerized version of the Space Shuttle
- International Space Station – full-scale mock-up of a habitation and laboratory module
- Swamp to Space – a history of the center and information on the local environment
- Evolution of Space Flight – a pictorial history of America's space program
- Needlepoint Mission Patches – replicas of NASA mission patches by members of the American Needlepoint Guild
- The Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command – a weather center, a representation of the ocean floor and information about the Earth's oceans

The Space Cockpit exhibit simulates piloting a Space Shuttle.

- Caring for the Gulf Together – how Stennis resident agencies support preservation of the Gulf of Mexico
- NASA's Technology: an Investment in America's Future – a review of how space exploration has led to technological advances that have improved everyday life
- Touching Tomorrow … Today – NASA's education exhibit highlighting the importance of sharing tomorrow's vision with today's youths and educators

Outdoor Exhibits

- Space Shuttle Main Engine
- F-1 engine that powered the first stage of the Saturn rocket
- Learjet Model 28 – airplane mounted with remote sensors that gather detailed images of the Earth
- Full-scale Nomad buoy from the National Data Buoy Center that represents the automated observing systems that measure weather and ocean conditions
- Scale model of the Saturn V rocket that took America's astronauts to the Moon
- Solid Rocket Booster that powers the Space Shuttle into orbit
- Jupiter-C rocket, the kind that put the first U.S. satellite into orbit
- Mars exhibits and activities, including the Motion Simulator that lets space adventurers experience the sights and sounds of a mission to Mars

Programs

The adventures of astronauts Dr. Halley Comet and Cosmo are portrayed in the live stage show, "Oh My Stars, We've Landed on Mars," performed daily in the StenniSphere auditorium. Space-themed videos play throughout the day. Keep up with the latest scientific discoveries with "Science Bulletins," broadcast by the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Experiments on how the environment of space affects the human body are conducted live at the new "Experimentation Station."

Astro Camp

Inspire your future astronaut, engineer or scientist at Stennis Space Center's Astro Camp. Weeklong day camps are held each summer for children ages 7-9 and 10-12. One-day Astro Camp Saturday missions are held during the school year for children ages 9-12. For dates, costs and other details call 1 (800) 237-1821 or visit www.ssc.nasa.gov/public/visitors.

Astronauts Cosmo, left, and Dr. Halley Comet take visitors along on an adventure to the Red Planet.

Additional Features

The RocKeTeria, a space-themed 1960s-style restaurant, offers a full menu of local favorites such as gumbo and po-boys. The Space Odyssey Gift Shop offers the "right stuff" for souvenirs or gifts.

Hours and Location

StenniSphere's Summer Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, Memorial Day through Labor Day. Winter Hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday. StenniSphere is closed on major holidays. Tours depart on a regular schedule each day from the Launch Pad at the I-10 Welcome Center, Exit 2. Special presentations for groups can be arranged. Admission to StenniSphere is free. Motion Simulator rides are $4 for children and $5 for adults.

For more information or to make reservations for groups, call StenniSphere at 1 (228) 688-2370 or 1 (800) 237-1821 (Option 1) in Mississippi and Louisiana, or access the StenniSphere home page on the World Wide Web at www.ssc.nasa.gov/public/visitors.